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Author(s): H. W. Bailey

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## The word “*But*” in Iranian

By H. W. BAILEY

I

A N important passage which has often<sup>1</sup> been treated, but not so far satisfactorily, is found on page 186 of the Iranian text of the *Bundahišn*,<sup>2</sup> lines 11–12,

ወ/ሮ በዚህ አገልግሎት በዚህ ማዕከል በዚህ ማዕከል በዚህ ማዕከል በዚህ ማዕከል በዚህ ማዕከል

that is, but *dēv* *ān kē-š* *pat Hindūkān* *paristēnd* *api-š* *vaχš* *pat* *ān butihā* *mēhmān* <*i*> *čēgōn* *bōdāsaf* *paristēt*: “the demon But is that which they worship in India and in his images a spirit is resident which is worshipped as *Bōdāsaf*.”

II

Three of these words demand consideration.

1. *but But*. With the discovery of Sogdian texts the history of the Indian word Buddha outside India was happily made clear, as Gauthiot had already recognized in *Journal Asiatique*, 1911, juillet-août, p. 55 *seq.* The Sogdian form of the name *pwt* “Buddha” occurs *passim* in the Buddhist texts, beside the adjectival *pwt’n’k* (= *butānak*) “of Buddha”. In Sogdian Indo-Iranian voiced consonants *bdg* had initially become spirants  $\beta\delta\gamma$ , which required the use of *ptk* for foreign words containing *bdg*. Hence the spelling *pwt* = *But*. This is the identical form which is found in New Persian *but* بُت, in the sense of “idol”. But the meaning of “Buddha” is still clear in many passages of New Persian. Thus we read in Juvainī<sup>3</sup>: *va dar xitāi but-parastī būda ast va rasūlī nazdīk i <ū> xān firistādā*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. West, *SBE*. v, 111; Darmesteter, *SBE*. iv, liii; Gray, *Foundations of Iranian Religions*, p. 203.

<sup>2</sup> Ed. Anklesaria, Bombay, 1908.

<sup>3</sup> See Salemann apud Radloff, *Kudatku Bilik*, vol. i, introd., and Marquart, *SBAW*, 1912, 486 seq.

*ast va tōyinān rā χvāsta*, “In Khitai (Northern China) there was Buddha-worship, and the Khan sent an envoy to him (the Chinese Emperor), and asked for Toyins (Buddhist priests,—an Uigur and Mongolian word)”. In Uigur occurs *pvt*, \*but rather than \**bud*.<sup>1</sup> In Pahlavi the word *bvt*<sup>2</sup> in the sense of “image” was recognized by all; it was doubted that *bvt* also meant “Buddha”, since the intermediate forms were missing.<sup>3</sup>

The Sogdian word *pwtv* is a transcription<sup>4</sup> from an Indian dialect. But the word “Buddha” reached Central Asia also in another form from China. The pronunciation of Chinese 佛 about the eighth century is given by the Tibetan spelling *hbur*, cf. *JRAS.*, 1927, p. 296. The -r represents the final Chinese consonant developed from final -t. Sogdian has this word in a compound *pwrskn \*bursang* “Buddha-sangha”.<sup>5</sup> From Sogdian the word passed to Uigur *bursāng*, and in the like form to Mongolian. The first part of Uigur (and, as a loan-word, Mongolian) *burχan* may be this same *bur-* “Buddha” (cf. Mironov, *Kuchean Studies*, p. 74). Then Uigur *tāngri burχan* is “the divine Khan Buddha”, but this meaning was not always fully recognized, so that in Manichæan Uigur texts *burχan zrušč* is “the Burχan Zoroaster”. Japanese, on the other hand, borrowed the word with -t, *Butu* (*Butsu*).

2. *vχš*.<sup>6</sup> A considerable semantic development lies behind this word. In the Turfan manuscripts in Middle Iranian (MPT.) *v'χš* \**vāχš*<sup>7</sup> occurs often in a sense which can be roughly rendered by “spirit”. Both the singular *v'χš* and the plural *v'χš'n* are found :—

'yg pyd'g bvd v'χš 'y hvr's'n vymnd<sup>8</sup>  
aiy paīdāy būd vāχš ē hvarāsān vīmand

“Then appeared the Spirit of the Land of Khorasan.”

<sup>1</sup> F. W. K. Müller, *Uigurica* [I], p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> In Pahlavi *v* (vāv) is used as a *mater lectionis* for ū as well as ī and ō: *dvr* = *dār* “far”, *gvš* = *gōs* “ear”, *kvnšn* = *kūnišn* “deed”.

<sup>3</sup> For “Buddha” on a Sassanian coin see Herzfeld, *Paikuli*, p. 45, corrected *Arch. Mitt.*, i, 136, note 2.

<sup>4</sup> For Sanskrit in Sogdian transcription see Gauthiot, *JA.*, 1911, jan.-févr. p. 94.

<sup>5</sup> See Rosenberg, *Bull. Acad. Sc. USSR.*, 1927, p. 1394.

<sup>6</sup> This has always been the crux of this passage.

<sup>7</sup> For the alef compare MPT. *'ry'm'n* beside *'ry'mn* “Aryāmān”, a loan-word from Avestan *airyaman-*, nom. sg. *airyama*, *airyōmā*.

<sup>8</sup> *vymnd* Pahl.  $\overset{\circ}{\chi} \overset{\circ}{\mu}$ , is probably \**vī-mantu-* to *man-* “dwell, remain”, cf. NPers. *nižand* “formidable; cast down”, \**ni-žantu-* to *gan-* “strike”, MPT. *znd-*, Av. *zantu-* “tribe” in MPT. *zndbyd*, Av. *zantupaiti-* to *zan-* “be born”.

*frystg'nv̄t p'y'nd v'χ̄s'nv̄t r'myn'nd  
frēstāyān-ot pāyānd vāχ̄sān-ot rāmēnānd*

"May the *Frēstays* (ἄγγελοι or ἀπόστολοι) protect thee, may the *vāχ̄ss* give thee joy."

But in Sogdian, as Lentz has shown,<sup>1</sup> Christ. Sogd. *v'χ̄s*, Manich. Sogd. *v'ḥ[š]* correspond to MPT. *svvn* in the sense of *λόγος*.<sup>2</sup> It is therefore clear that we have here to do with a technical word from the Avestan (nom. sing.) *vāχ̄s* and *vāχ̄s*<sup>3</sup> "a spoken word", which is the meaning also of Sogd. (Buddh.) *w'γ̄s*. For this use of the nom. sing. we have a parallel in MPT. *drvχ̄s* \**druχ̄s* "evil one", Av. (nom. sing.) *druχ̄s*. The Pahlavi has *drvč* \**druž*.

In Zoroastrian writings the word *vaχ̄s* "spirit" is found in the Škand-gumānīk Vičār, a Pāzand text.

In chapter xiii, 7, *vaχ̄s* corresponds to the Hebrew פָּרוּחַ in a paraphrase of the beginning of Genesis:—

*u vaχ̄s i Yazað aβar rōð i q aβ i syāh hamē nyāβeð.*

"And the spirit of God ever had desire upon the face of that black water."

In chapter xiv, 12, quoting also from Jewish Scripture, Is. 30, 28,

*u huzv̄a čun ātaš i sōzā*

*u vaχ̄s čun rōð i arōvīnā*

"And his tongue like burning fire

And his spirit like a rushing river."

The word is found also in another passage of the Iran. Bund. in the "Chapter of Opposites", p. 48, l. 14–15: *apārīk dēvīk vaχ̄s ō yazdīk vaχ̄s čēgōn dēvān druzān \*yātūkān māzānīkān ō yazd bayān amahraspandān* "and the other dēvian spirits are opposed to the yazdian spirits, as dēvs, družs, sorcerers, Mazanian demons to *yazds*, *bayṣ* (gods), and *Amahraspands*."

The word *vaχ̄s* is, therefore, assured for Pahlavi, beside the MPT. passages.<sup>4</sup>

3. *bvt'sp.* In this we have clearly to recognize another word received by Pahlavi through Sogdian from India. It is the Sanskrit *Bodhisattva*. The usual Sogdian form in Buddhist texts is the exact transcription of the Sanskrit word, *pwtystβ* \**Bodisatβa*, but a

<sup>1</sup> "Die Stellung Jesu im Manichäismus," p. 85, *ABA W.*, 1926.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Pahl. *vχ̄v̄r* \**vaχ̄avar* "prophet" = \**vaχ̄a-barā*.

<sup>3</sup> Bartholomae, *AIW.*, 1334–5.

<sup>4</sup> See Salemann, *Manichaeische Studien*, s.v. פָּרוּחַ.

developed form is found in the “Sūtra of Causes and Effects”<sup>1</sup> *pwtyṣβ* \**Bodisaβ*, l. 284; *pwtsβ* \**bod(i)saβ*, l. 555. The word passed hence to Uigur, which has *pvtystβ* \**Bodisatβ* in Buddhist texts,<sup>2</sup> but *ptysβ* \**Bodisaβ* or *\*Bodisaf* in Manichæan texts.<sup>3</sup> From Uigur it passed to Mongolian *pvtystβ*, which became by wrong reading *bodisung* and *bodisug*. In the Chinese the word became 菩薩 (modern *p'u sah*), which the Japanese read as *Bosatu* (*Bosatsu*) and the Uigurs as *pvs'r \*bosar*.

Here, then, we have the source of Pahlavi *bvt'sp* in Manichæan texts. But it is equally the source of the Arabic بادساف *budāsaf*, and of the *Ioasaph* of the Western form of the legend of “Barlaam and Joasaph”.<sup>4</sup>

It is certain, therefore, that the word “Bodhisattva” had reached Persia, independently of this *Bundahišn* passage. Probably the Arabic form with medial alif *budāsaf* is due to the Pahlavi which also has alef: *bvt'sp Bōdāsaf*.

### III

But it is clear from the context, which is an enumeration of the names of *dēvs*, mostly with Avestan names, that the *bvt* of this *Bundahišn* passage is intended to represent the *Būti* of the Avesta. Here *Būti* occurs three times,<sup>5</sup> each time as nom. sing. in this form *Būti*, which indicates either an insufficient understanding of an inflected language, or perhaps more probably a foreign word. It is important to remember that the Avestan alphabet is derived from an Aramaic alphabet, in which, as in Pahlavi, the three letters, alef, vāv, and yod, served as *Matres lectionis*: Avestan ӯ (u) and ӯ (ū) are representatives of vāv. Geldner<sup>6</sup> noticed that the manuscripts were undecided in the use of ӯ and ӯ. The result is that, in Avestan texts, transcribed *u* and *ū* may both stand for original Indo-Iranian *u* or *ū*; cf. *ūna-* and *una-*. Graphically ӯ ӯ ӯ may correspond to an etymological

<sup>1</sup> Ed. Gauthiot and Pelliot, *Le Sūtra des causes et des effets*, 1926.

<sup>2</sup> F. W. K. Müller, *Uigurica* [I], p. 17 *et passim*.

<sup>3</sup> Von Le Coq, “Ein christl. u. ein manich. MSfragment,” *ABA W.*, 1909, p. 1202 *seq.*

<sup>4</sup> Von Le Coq, loc. cit. Cf. Christensen, *Les types du premier homme et du premier roi*, p. 206.

<sup>5</sup> *Vidēvdāt*, 19, 1, 2, 43.

<sup>6</sup> K. Geldner, *Avesta, Prolegomena* L, col. 2.

\**buti*- or \**būti*. Decision in such cases can only be obtained from New Iranian dialects<sup>1</sup> (or Middle Iranian in the early Arabic writers) in comparison with Sanskrit. Here the NPers. *but* is decisive for \**Brūti*, which is identical with Sogdian *pwy*.<sup>2</sup> This conclusion agrees with the date of the *Vidēvdāt* passages, which, as Herzfeld<sup>3</sup> has shown, is about the middle of the second century B.C. In substance Darmesteter<sup>4</sup> was right, though his details can now be corrected, in recognizing "Buddha" here.

<sup>1</sup> Sakan (in a fully vocalized Indian alphabet) does not help in this particular case, since Buddha and Bodhisattva are simply transcribed from Sanskrit.

<sup>2</sup> The final *-i* of the Avestan *Būti* probably betrays its Eastern Iranian origin.

<sup>3</sup> *Archæologische Mitteilungen aus Iran*, i, 79, note 1; 136, note 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Zend-Avesta* (1893), 3, xlviii, cf. 2, 259.